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to prepare a global legally binding instrument
on mercury
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Item 4 (b) of the provisional agenda*

Report on the activities of the interim secretariat during the period prior to the entry into force of the Convention: cooperative activities with other relevant actors

Progress report on cooperation and coordination with other actors

Note by the secretariat

1. The Conference of Plenipotentiaries on the Minamata Convention on Mercury, in paragraph 12 of its resolution on arrangements in the interim period (UNEP(DTIE)/Hg/CONF/4, annex I), requested the interim secretariat to cooperate and coordinate, as appropriate, with other relevant actors, including the secretariat of the Basel Convention on Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal, the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade and the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, in order to make full use of relevant experience and expertise.

2. In its resolution on matters pertaining to other international bodies, the Conference invited international bodies such as the World Health Organization (WHO), the International Labour Organization and the World Customs Organization to cooperate closely with the intergovernmental negotiating committee and the Conference of the Parties to the Minamata Convention to support the implementation of the Convention, particularly Article 16, as appropriate, and to provide information to the Conference of the Parties on the progress made in that regard.

3. During the interim period between the signing of the Convention and its entry into force, the secretariat has been cooperating closely with a number of organizations. Reports on the activities of four such organizations, prepared by the organizations themselves, are set out in the annexes to the present note, as follows: secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions (annex I); Global Environment Facility (annex II); United Nations Institute for Training and Research (annex III); and WHO (annex IV). The reports are presented without formal editing by the secretariat.

* UNEP(DTIE)/Hg/INC.7/1.

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Annex I

Information submitted by the secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions to the seventh session of the intergovernmental negotiating committee to prepare a global legally binding instrument on mercury (INC-7)

Introduction

1. The present report summarizes the main cooperation and coordination activities undertaken by the secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm (BRS) conventions with the interim secretariat of the Minamata Convention in areas of mutual interest, as well as other activities conducted jointly by parties to the BRS conventions and States implementing the Minamata Convention, since INC-6.[1]

2. The cooperative activities described in the present report are undertaken by the BRS secretariat in response to requests made by the conferences of the parties to the BRS conventions in the framework of their dialogue with the Conference of the Plenipotentiaries of the Minamata Convention or the INCs, as described below.

3. In paragraph 27 of the omnibus decision on enhancing cooperation and coordination among the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions adopted during their meetings in May 2013[2], the conferences of the parties to the three conventions expressed their interest and signalled their readiness to cooperate and coordinate with the Minamata Convention on Mercury. In paragraph 28 of the same decision, they invited the Conference of the Plenipotentiaries of the Minamata Convention to consider cooperation and coordination in areas of mutual interest to the four conventions.

4. In paragraph 12 of its resolution on arrangements in the interim period, the Conference of the Plenipotentiaries of the Minamata Convention requested the interim secretariat of the Minamata Convention to cooperate and coordinate, as appropriate, with other relevant actors, including the BRS secretariat in order to make full use of relevant experience and expertise. Paragraph 5 of the resolution on matters pertaining to other international bodies invited the BRS secretariat to cooperate closely, as appropriate, with the interim secretariat of the Minamata Convention in areas of mutual interest.

5. At their meetings in May 2015, the conferences of the parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions welcomed cooperation and coordination between the BRS secretariat and the interim secretariat of the Minamata Convention and requested the BRS secretariat to continue and enhance such cooperation and coordination in areas of mutual interest with a view to fostering policy coherence, where appropriate, and maximizing the effective and efficient use of resources at all levels.

6. The decisions on international cooperation and coordination (BC-12/17, RC-7/9, SC-7/27) containing the request described in paragraph 4 above are set out in the appendix to the present note.

7. In the fulfilment of the above-mentioned mandates, the Executive Secretary of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions and the Coordinator of the interim secretariat of the Minamata Convention participate in meetings of the respective conventions' governing bodies.

Activities pertaining to mercury wastes

8. In Article 11 of the Minamata Convention, the resolutions adopted by the Conference of the Plenipotentiaries, and decision BC-11/5 of the Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention, Governments recognize the close relationship between the Minamata Convention and the Basel Convention on issues related to the management of mercury wastes, including with respect to the updating of the Basel Convention technical guidelines for the environmentally sound management of mercury wastes.

9. In its decision BC-11/5, the Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention initiated the updating of the technical guidelines on mercury wastes that had been adopted at its tenth meeting. The updating of the technical guidelines on mercury wastes was carried out by Japan as lead country, in consultation with experts nominated to participate in the small intersessional working group

[1] Information on cooperative activities between BRS secretariat and the interim secretariat of the Minamata Convention was made available to the INC-6 in document UNEP(DTIE)/Hg/INC.6/INF/5.

[2] See decisions BC.Ex-2/1, RC.Ex-2/1 and SC.Ex-2/1, part V on wider cooperation.

established by decision IX/15[3]. The process for updating the technical guidelines involved several rounds of comments by parties and others. The updated technical guidelines were considered by the Basel Convention Open-ended Working Group at its ninth meeting, in Geneva, from 16 to 19 September 2014. Pursuant to decision OEWG-9/4, the Working Group invited Japan and the small intersessional working group to continue the task of updating the technical guidelines and to submit the next revised version of the guidelines to the Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention, at its twelfth meeting, in May 2015.

10. By its decision BC-12/4, the Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention adopted the updated technical guidelines on mercury wastes and requested them to be disseminated to parties and others, including the interim secretariat of the Minamata Convention on Mercury. The technical guidelines on mercury wastes adopted by the Basel Convention Conference of the Parties are set out in document UNEP/CHW.12/5/Add.8/Rev.1[4]. The technical guidelines are currently being translated in the other five United Nations official languages and will be posted on the website once available.

11. In decision BC-12/4, the COP also invited parties and others to use the technical guidelines and to submit comments on their experiences and on any developments regarding methods for the environmentally sound disposal of mercury wastes, including the long-term effectiveness of the stabilization and solidification of wastes consisting of mercury. Information may be submitted to the secretariat no later than two months before the thirteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (scheduled to take place in May 2017).

12. In line with decision BC-12/4, the BRS secretariat organized, in cooperation with the Basel Convention Coordinating Centre in Uruguay, a subregional workshop for enhancing capacities for ESM of mercury wastes, through dissemination of the technical guidelines on mercury wastes, in Latin American countries in Montevideo, from 17 to 19 November 2015. The interim secretariat was informed of this activity which was carried out with the involvement of UNEP Chemicals and Waste. Follow-up activities will be undertaken in countries of the-sub region in 2016.

13. The BRS secretariat is involved in the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership as a member of the Partnership Advisory Group and the Mercury Partnership area groups on reduction in products, supply and storage and on waste management. The Secretariat participates in relevant meetings and provides inputs to the work of the Partnership, as appropriate.

14. The Expert Working Group on environmentally sound management (ESM), a group mandated by the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention to elaborate and implement actions for the implementation of ESM, is in the process of developing fact sheets on specific waste streams, including mercury wastes. The fact sheets are intended as a collection of practical, user-friendly information for policy makers on the ESM of specific waste streams under the Basel Convention. At its fourth meeting in November 2015, the Group agreed that, given the ongoing activities following the adoption of the Minamata Convention on Mercury, no further work would be undertaken at the present time on the factsheet on mercury wastes. The matter will be considered further in the light of developments within the context of the Minamata Convention.

Activities pertaining to the environmentally sound interim storage of mercury

15. In line with relevant mandates, the BRS Secretariat cooperated with UNEP Chemicals and Waste to develop a practical sourcebook on mercury storage and disposal. The Secretariat provided inputs to the development of the sourcebook in particular to ensure coherence with the Basel Convention technical guidelines on mercury wastes. The finalised sourcebook was launched at the ICCM-4, in Geneva, from 28 September to 2 October 2015.

Activities pertaining to the group of technical experts on air emissions to prepare the guidance called for under article 8 of the Convention

16. The provisions of Article 5 of the Stockholm Convention cover the minimization and, where feasible, ultimate elimination of unintentionally produced persistent organic pollutants (POPs) listed in Annex C, Part I. To reduce the total releases of POPs derived from anthropogenic sources, parties are

[3] The list of nominated experts is available on the Basel Convention website at: http://www.basel.int/Implementation/TechnicalMatters/DevelopmentofTechnicalGuidelines/MercuryWaste/tabid/2380/Default.aspx

[4] Available at: http://www.basel.int/TheConvention/ConferenceoftheParties/Meetings/COP12/tabid/4248/mctl/ViewDetails/EventModID/8051/EventID/542/xmid/13027/Default.aspx.

also required to implement best available techniques (BAT) and best environmental practice (BEP) for the sources listed in Annex C, Parts II and III. A number of the source categories listed in Annex C of the Stockholm Convention are the same as those listed in Annex D of the Minamata Convention. The Minamata Convention has taken the same approach as the Stockholm Convention to provide for the development of guidance on best available techniques and best environmental practices to control and, where feasible, reduce emissions.

17. The provisions and guidelines under the Basel Convention are also relevant to the development of guidance called for under 8 of the Minamata Convention. The technical guidelines developed under the Basel Convention on waste management are relevant to the management of sludge and other wastes resulting from the capture of mercury from relevant sources, and could be valuable in minimizing or preventing cross-media effects which may result from poor management of such wastes.[5]

18. Since there are similarities between the requirements and processes under the Basel and Stockholm Conventions and the Minamata Convention, the BRS secretariat has participated in the four meetings held by the group of technical experts established by the Conference of the Plenipotentiaries on the Minamata Convention to develop the guidance called for in article 8 of the Convention. Basel Convention and Stockholm Convention experts involved in the development of the technical guidelines on mercury wastes and in the review/update of the Stockholm Convention BAT/BEP guidelines have also been part of the Minamata Convention BAT/BEP expert group and provided relevant technical input. Similarly, many of the experts involved in the development of the guidance under the Minamata Convention have been involved in the relevant technical work under the Basel and Stockholm Conventions. Experience and technical expertise have thus been shared regarding the Stockholm Convention BAT/BEP and the Basel Convention technical guidelines on mercury wastes.

Activities pertaining to financial resources

19. At its seventh meeting in May 2015, in its decision SC-7/21, the Conference of the Parties to the Stockholm Convention requested the BRS secretariat to identify possible elements of guidance from the Stockholm Convention to the GEF that also address the relevant priorities of the Basel and Rotterdam conventions and to inform Mercury INC-7 about this task. Information related to the implementation of this request is submitted by the BRS secretariat to the INC-7 in document UNEP(DTIE)/Hg/INC.7/INF/8.

20. The Stockholm Convention has gathered vast experience with the operations of its financial mechanism in accordance with Articles 13 and 14 of the Convention. Several arrangements have been established under the Convention to ensure the effectiveness of the mechanism, particularly the existence of a memorandum of understanding between the COP and the Council of the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the provision of specific guidance on funding priorities, the determination of the funding needs for the implementation of the Convention, and a review of the effectiveness of the financial mechanism.

21. The BRS secretariat cooperates and coordinates with the interim secretariat of the Minamata Convention on relevant experience with procedures and approaches established under the financial mechanism of the Stockholm Convention. As part of the cooperative activities undertaken, a joint retreat between the GEF, the BRS secretariat, the interim secretariat of the Minamata Convention and the SAICM secretariat was organized on 5 October 2015. The BRS secretariat has provided inputs to preparation of INC-7 documents on the financial mechanism under the Minamata Convention (i.e. draft memorandum of understanding between the Minamata COP and the GEF Council set out in document UNEP(DTIE)/Hg/INC.7/7 and on draft guidance to GEF set out in document UNEP(DTIE)/Hg/INC.7/8).

22. The BRS secretariat cooperates and coordinates with the interim secretariat of the Minamata Convention on other related financial resources issues. Pursuant to decisions BC-12/18, RC-7/8 and SC-7/22 on the implementation of the integrated approach to financing, the conferences of the parties to the BRS Conventions welcomed that, according to the terms of reference of the special programme, the Executive Secretary may participate as an observer in the meetings of the executive board of the special programme. The COPs also requested the Executive Secretary to attend such meetings and requested the BRS secretariat to cooperate, as appropriate, with the secretariat of the special programme.

[5] The technical guidelines are available at: http://www.basel.int/Implementation/Publications/TechnicalGuidelines/tabid/2362/Default.aspx.

23. Accordingly, consultations and exchanges have taken place, as necessary, in relation to the special programme to support institutional strengthening at the national level for implementation of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions, the Minamata convention and the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management. The BRS secretariat has also been consulted by the interim secretariat on the preparation of the document for the ad hoc expert group on financing on the options for the hosting institutions of the specific international programme to support capacity-building and technical assistance.

Activities pertaining to awareness-raising and technical assistance including regional centres

24. Another area of common interest among the four conventions pertains to awareness-raising and technical assistance, including regional centres under the Basel and Stockholm conventions.

25. At their meetings in May 2015, the conferences of the parties to the Basel and Stockholm conventions, in decisions BC-12/10 and SC-7/17, invited the regional centres undertaking activities on mercury to provide relevant information to the BRS secretariat in the view that it would be taken into account by the Secretariat in the next evaluation of the regional centres, in accordance with the applicable synergy criterion. The COPs also requested the BRS secretariat to forward that information to the interim secretariat of the Minamata Convention for possible consideration by INC-7. Information in response to this request is submitted by the BRS secretariat to the INC-7 in document UNEP(DTIE)/Hg/INC.7/INF/9.

26. The BRS secretariat has provided support to the interim secretariat of the Minamata Convention for the organisation of subregional awareness-raising workshops in support for the ratification and early implementation of the Minamata Convention. In addition to the support provided, the BRS secretariat shared experiences and lessons learned from the ratification and implementation of the BRS conventions, including any amendment thereof or Protocol thereto. This relates particularly to steps and technical modalities to follow towards the deposit of the instrument to consent to be bound. As at 20 June 2014, the BRS secretariat assisted with the organization of the workshops held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia (19-21 March 2014), Nairobi, Kenya (23-23 April and 28-30 April 2014) and Dakar, Senegal (9-11 July and 14-16 July 2014). As part of this support, the secretariat also assisted with the organization of online training sessions in preparation for the above-mentioned subregional workshops.

27. The BRS secretariat has organized regional meetings to prepare for the meetings of the conferences of the parties held in 2015[6] in conjunction with regional workshops organized by the interim secretariat to support ratification and early implementation of the Minamata Convention in March and April 2015. The back-to-back meetings featured joint discussions and provided opportunities to exchange information on experience gained from the implementation of the BRS conventions and on areas of common interest to the four conventions.

28. The annual joint meeting to enhance cooperation and coordination between the regional centres under the Basel and Stockholm conventions was held in Geneva, from 5 to 8 October 2015. A representative of the interim secretariat of the Minamata Convention provided an update at the meeting on status of ratifications of the Minamata Convention, on preparations for the Mercury INC-7 and regional preparatory consultations. During the meeting, the regional centres exchanged information on their current activities involving the Minamata Convention as well as possible future activities.

29. As a follow up to a project for the development of inventories and management plans for hazardous wastes containing or contaminated with mercury in Argentina, Costa Rica and Uruguay, the Secretariat is disseminating the experience and results of the project in cooperation with the Basel Convention Coordinating Centre in Uruguay.

30. Furthermore, the BRS secretariat provided expertise to a mercury wastes workshop where participants discussed the current situation on mercury waste management at international level and in Asian countries, and to the inception workshop of the GEF funded Minamata Initial Assessment project implemented in Cambodia, Pakistan and Philippines. Both workshops were organized by UNEP IETC back-to-back in Osaka, from 16 to 18 December 2015.

[6] The 2015 COPs regional preparatory meetings were requested in paragraph 2 of decisions BC-11/20, RC-6/19 and 6/25.

Activities pertaining to the servicing of meetings

31. The BRS secretariat and the interim secretariat of the Minamata Convention have taken steps to enhance their cooperation on the organisation and servicing of INCs and COPs meetings as well as regional preparatory meetings/consultations.

32. Staff from the interim secretariat of the Minamata Convention provided support to the BRS secretariat during the meetings of the conferences of the parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions in Geneva, from 4 to 15 May 2015.

33. The BRS secretariat was consulted by the interim secretariat of the Minamata Convention in the preparation of INC-7 documents in areas of relevance to the conventions. Upon request, the BRS secretariat has provided substantive inputs to documents where it has a particular expertise and experience. The BRS secretariat will be providing support to the interim secretariat in the running of the INC-7.

Other cooperative activities undertaken by the BRS secretariat and the interim secretariat of the Minamata Convention

34. The BRS secretariat and the interim secretariat of the Minamata Convention have taken steps to enhance their cooperation on other various matters, such as on joint outreach and communication as well as on overarching policy initiatives (e.g. efforts to mainstream chemicals and wastes into sustainable development goals, within the framework of 2030 sustainable development agenda). Other areas of mutual interest, such as compliance, may lead to cooperative activities in the future, as appropriate.

Appendix

Decisions BC-12/17, RC-7/9, SC-7/27: International cooperation and coordination

The Conference of the Parties

1. *Takes note* of the report by the Secretariat on international cooperation and coordination;[7]

2. *Joins* with the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme in emphasizing that the sound management of chemicals and wastes is an essential and cross-cutting element of sustainable development and is of great relevance to the sustainable development agenda;

3. *Highlights* the contribution of the Basel Convention on the Transboundary Movement of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal, the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade and the Stockholm Convention to the protection of human health and the environment from hazardous chemicals and wastes through the sound management of chemicals and wastes;

4. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to inform the co-facilitators for the consultations on the post-2015 development agenda under the United Nations General Assembly about the relevance of the conventions and the contribution that they can make to the implementation of that agenda and to provide input (for example information transmitted to the Secretariat in the national reports under the Basel and Stockholm conventions and scientific data prepared by the Persistent Organic Pollutants Review Committee, the Chemical Review Committee and the Global Monitoring Plan under the Stockholm Convention) to the United Nations Statistical Commission and other relevant forums for the development of indicators relevant to the sound management of chemicals and wastes;

5. *Emphasizes* the importance of enhancing cooperation and coordination with other international bodies to facilitate the fulfilment of the objectives of the conventions, in particular within the chemicals and wastes cluster;

6. *Invites* the Environment Management Group to look at how the United Nations system can deliver in meeting the 2020 goal for the sound management of chemicals and wastes;

7. *Welcomes* United Nations Environment Assembly resolution 1/5 on chemicals and waste and requests the Executive Secretary to cooperate with the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme in fostering the implementation of that resolution and, more generally, on the continued and coordinated strengthening of the sound management of chemicals and wastes in the long term;

8. *Joins* the United Nations Environment Assembly in emphasizing the need for continued and strengthened multisectoral and multi-stakeholder involvement and requests the Executive Secretary to participate in the fourth session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management and to ensure, within available resources, the effective involvement of the Secretariat in the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management;

9. *Also joins* the United Nations Environment Assembly in recognizing the continued relevance of the sound management of chemicals and wastes beyond 2020 and joins with the International Conference on Chemicals Management and others in stressing the importance of considering long-term policies, building on United Nations Environment Assembly resolution 1/5 and its annex, on strengthening the sound management of chemicals and wastes in the long term;

10. *Encourages* the organizations of the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals to present for consideration by the International Conference on Chemicals Management at its fourth session specific policies and actions planned by each organization, within their own mandates, to meet the 2020 goal;

11. *Welcomes* cooperation and coordination between the Secretariat and the interim secretariat of the Minamata Convention and requests the Secretariat to continue and enhance such cooperation and coordination in areas of mutual interest with a view to fostering policy coherence, where appropriate, and maximizing the effective and efficient use of resources at all levels;

[7] UNEP/CHW.12/INF/31-UNEP/FAO/RC/COP.7/INF/20-UNEP/POPS/COP.7/INF/41.

12. *Requests* the Secretariat to continue:

(a) To enhance cooperation and coordination within the chemicals and wastes cluster, in particular to facilitate activities at the regional and country levels that would support the implementation of the agreements in the cluster in areas of mutual interest, and to consider which activities of the programmes of work may be effectively implemented in cooperation with other entities within the cluster;

(b) To enhance cooperation and coordination with other international bodies in areas of relevance to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions, including in the areas and with the organizations listed in the aforementioned report;

(c) To report on the implementation of the present decision to the Conference of the Parties at its next meeting.

Annex II

Global Environment Facility

GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY
INVESTING IN OUR PLANET

Report of the Global Environment Facility to the Seventh Session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee on Mercury

Global Environment Facility
January 11, 2016

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Acronym List

ASGM	Artisanal Small-Scale Gold Mining
BAT	Best Available Techniques
BET	Best Environmental Practices
BRS	Basel, Rotterdam, and Stockholm Conventions
COP	Conference of the Parties
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CSP	Country Support Program
EA	Enabling Activity
FSP	Full-sized Project
GEAP	Gender Equality Action Plan
GEF	Global Environment Facility
INC	Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee
KM	Knowledge Management
MIA	Mercury Initial Assessment
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MSP	Medium-sized Project
NAP	National Action Plan
NPFE	National Portfolio Formulation Exercise
OFP	Operational Focal Points
PPG	Project Preparation Grant
POP	Persistent Organic Pollutant
PVC	Polyvinyl Chloride
RBM	Results-Based Management
SGP	Small Grants Programme
STAP	Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UPOPs	Unintentionally Produced Persistent Organic Pollutants
VCM	Vinyl Chloride Monomer

Executive Summary

1. The Minamata Convention on Mercury, adopted by the Conference of Plenipotentiaries in October 2013[8], is the most recent Convention served by the Global Environment Facility (GEF), and seeks to limit human and environmental exposure to mercury by reducing and eliminating mercury emissions and releases globally. The GEF was included in the financial mechanism by Article 13 of the Minamata Convention[9]. The GEF Instrument was amended by the Fifth GEF Assembly, held in May 2014, to incorporate the Minamata Convention. This report presents the work of the GEF on mercury between July 2014 and October 2015.

2. In response to the guidance from sixth Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC6) held in Bangkok, Thailand, in November 2014, the GEF eligibility criteria for the enabling activities, which are Minamata Initial Assessments (MIAs), artisanal small-scale gold mining (ASGM) National Action Plan (NAP) development, have been revised to include non-signatories that are taking bona fide steps to ratify the Minamata Convention. As of November 2015, the GEF has cumulatively supported these enabling activities in 71 countries to facilitate ratification.

3. Between July 2014 and October 2015, the GEF has programmed $24.6 million[10] in mercury projects, including, MIA, ASGM NAP, capacity building, healthcare waste management, and reduction the production and use of mercury in manufacturing processes. This amount is 17 percent of the GEF-6 programming targets of $141 million for the Convention on Mercury.

4. The projects approved during the reporting period are expected to achieve 360 tonnes of mercury phase out, which is 36 percent of the GEF-6 target for the reduction of 1,000 tonnes of mercury. The target was developed taking into account the use of mercury in the vinyl chloride monomer (VCM) sector in China and the usage of mercury in the artisanal and small scale gold mining (ASGM) sector.

[8] UNEP(DTIE)/Hg/CONF/3.

[9] Article 13 (6). The Mechanism shall include: (a) The Global Environment Facility Trust Fund; and (b) A specific international Programme to support capacity-building and technical assistance.

[10] This number includes only the GEF grant amount, not associated fees or Project Preparation Grant (PPG).

Introduction

1. The Global Environment Facility (GEF) serves as a financial mechanism for a number of Multilateral Environmental Agreements, including the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, the Convention of Biological Diversity, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, and the Minamata Convention on Mercury. The Minamata Convention is the newest Convention served by the GEF. The Convention seeks to limit human and environmental exposure to mercury by reducing and eliminating mercury emissions and releases globally.

2. Consistent with the resolution on financial arrangements in the final act of the Conference of Plenipotentiaries on the Minamata Convention on Mercury[11], during the interim period, the GEF is providing support to countries towards early ratification and implementation of the convention.

3. This report presents the work of the GEF on mercury between July 2014 and October 2015.

GEF's Support to the Minamata Convention on Mercury

GEF's Role in the Convention

4. The Minamata Convention on Mercury was adopted on 10 October 2013, and the GEF was included in the financial mechanism in Article 13 of the Convention.

5. The sixth replenishment period of the GEF (GEF-6) began on 1 July 2014. For the GEF-6 period of 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2018, $141 million has been allocated to mercury projects. The allocation of GEF resources for the Minamata Convention responds to guidance from the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC), and eventually guidance from the Conference of the Parties (COP), in line with the GEF-6 Chemicals and Waste Strategy[12].

Guidance and GEF Response

6. In regard to the GEF, Article 13 of the Minamata Convention states the following:

"The Global Environment Facility Trust Fund shall provide new, predictable, adequate and timely financial resources to meet costs in support of implementation of this Convention as agreed by the Conference of the Parties. For the purposes of this Convention, the Global Environment Facility Trust Fund shall be operated under the guidance of and be accountable to the Conference of the Parties. The Conference of the Parties shall provide guidance on overall strategies, policies, programme priorities and eligibility for access to and utilization of financial resources. In addition, the Conference of the Parties shall provide guidance on an indicative list of categories of activities that could receive support from the Global Environment Facility Trust Fund. The Global Environment Facility Trust Fund shall provide resources to meet the agreed incremental costs of global environmental benefits and the agreed full costs of some enabling activities."

7. The INC 6 held in Bangkok, Thailand, in November 2014, provided the guidance to the GEF to apply the following eligibility criteria in providing financial support to the

[11] UNEP(DTIE)/Hg/CONF/4.
[12] GEF/A.5/07/Rev.01.

developing countries and countries with economies in transition for activities under the Minamata Convention on Mercury[13]:

(a) Parties to the Convention;

(b) Signatories to the Convention in undertaking activities, particularly enabling activities, to facilitate early implementation and ratification of the Convention;

(c) Non-signatories to the Convention, for enabling activities, provided that any such State is taking meaningful steps towards becoming a Party as evidenced by a letter from the relevant minister to the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme and to the Chief Executive Officer and Chairperson of the GEF.

8. In response to the above INC6 guidance, the GEF Council approved new eligibility criteria in January 2015. The GEF secretariat circulated this revision of criteria among the relevant GEF Agencies[14] in February 2015. The Interim Minamata Convention Secretariat also shared two model letters with these GEF Agencies, United Nations Institute for Training and Research and the World Health Organization, to be submitted from non-signatories on their meaningful steps towards becoming a Party (Annex 1 and Annex 2).

9. The INC6 also requested the GEF to consider the following activities when providing financial resources to developing countries and countries with economies in transition:

(a) Enabling activities as outlined in the Initial Guidelines for Enabling Activities for the Minamata Convention on Mercury of the GEF, particularly Minamata Convention initial assessment activities and national action plans for artisanal and small-scale gold mining, to facilitate ratification;

(b) Activities to implement the provisions of the Convention, affording priority to those that:

(i) Relate to legally-binding obligations;

(ii) Facilitate early implementation on entry into force; and

(iii) Allow for reduction in mercury emissions and releases and address the health and environmental impacts of mercury.

10. The GEF-6 Chemicals and Waste Strategy has two strategic objectives to meet the goals of eliminating harmful chemicals and waste. As for mercury, two programs support the activities requested by the INC6. Program 2 supports enabling activities (EA) and promote their integration into national budgets and planning processes, national and sector policies and actions and global monitoring. Program 4 is for reduction or elimination of anthropogenic emissions and releases of mercury to the environment. The GEF has programmed $141 million for mercury projects under these two programs of GEF-6.

11. During the reporting period, 23 projects with the GEF grant amount of $25.6 million have been supported including EA, medium-sized projects (MSP)[15], and full-sized projects

[13] Annex III, UNEP(DTIE)/Hg/INC.6/24.

[14] Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), and World Bank (WB).

[15] Medium-sized projects are projects under $2 million.

(FSP)[16]. The supported projects are consistent with the guidance from the INC6, and GEF-6 Chemicals and Waste Strategy and guidelines for enabling activities for the Minamata Convention. The projects have provided assistance to countries to develop initial assessments of their mercury issues, mercury reduction or elimination, and sustainable alternatives (see next section).

12. Annex 3 summarizes guidance from INC6 and GEF responses. Annex 4 summarizes guidance from the Conference of Plenipotentiaries on the Minamata Convention on Mercury and GEF responses.

Communication with the Interim Minamata Convention Secretariat

13. Since the adoption of the Convention in October 2013, the GEF Secretariat has initiated formal cooperation and communication with the Interim Minamata Convention Secretariat in order to enhance coordination, share information and collaborate on issues related to the implementation of the Convention.

14. The GEF and the Interim Minamata Convention Secretariat had an in-person meeting during the GEF Chemicals and Waste Task Force Meeting in May 2015 that included representatives from the GEF implementing and project agencies, the Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel (STAP) of the GEF, and the Secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm (BRS) Conventions. Participants discussed the GEF-6 Chemicals and Waste Strategy, and shared information on enabling activities and project ideas.

15. The GEF and the Interim Minamata Convention Secretariat had another in-person meeting after the fourth International Conference on Chemical Management in October 2015. This meeting discussed preparation for the INC7 to be held in Dead Sea, Jordan, in March 2016, especially the draft Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Conference of the Parties of the Minamata Convention and the GEF Council according to the conclusion of INC6.

16. The GEF joined the Minamata Convention regional workshops to support countries in the interim period until the Convention enters into force. During the reporting period, the GEF participated in the following regional workshops:

    (a) Caribbean, Trinidad and Tobago (January 2015)

    (b) Pacific, Samoa (January 2015)

    (c) Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia, Belarus (February 2015).

17. The GEF also joined the back-to-back Minamata and BRS Conventions Regional Meetings in 2015. The GEF participated in the following regional meetings:

    (a) Asia and the Pacific, Indonesia (March 2015)

    (b) Africa, Kenya (March 2015)

    (c) Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia, Slovakia (April 2015)

    (d) Latin America and the Caribbean, Uruguay (April 2015).

[16] Fill-sized projects are project over $2 million.

GEF's Contributions to the Implementation of the Minamata Convention on Mercury in the Interim Period

Projects Approved in GEF-6 (July 2014–October 2015)

18. During the reporting period, the GEF has programmed $24.6 million in mercury projects, including, MIA, ASGM NAP, capacity building, healthcare waste management, and reduction the production and use of mercury in manufacturing processes. This amount is 17 percent of the GEF-6 programming targets of $141 million for the Convention on Mercury.

19. The GEF has approved 20 Minamata Initial Assessment (MIA) projects and two artisanal small-scale gold mining (ASGM) National Action Plan (NAP) projects in 33 countries with the total amount of $8.3 million (see Table 1 and Figure 1). The number of countries supported by the GEF for MIAs and/or ASGM NAP becomes 73 through GEF-5 and GEF-6. Among these countries, eleven countries have already accepted or ratified the convention. Annex 5 summarizes the project approved during reporting period.

20. GEF also supported two FSPs and a MSP to help capacity building, healthcare waste management, and emission reduction form manufacturing process. These projects are expected to achieve 360 tonnes of mercury phase out, which is 36 percent of the GEF-6 target for the reduction of 1,000 tonnes of mercury.

21. One FSP in China aims to decrease the production and use of mercury by 50 percent per ton of vinyl chloride monomer (VCM) production in 2020, which will result in the reduction of 360 tons of mercury usage in polyvinyl chloride (PVC) industries. This will be achieved through optimizing the existing production and achieving 90 percent recovery of mercury in production processes and promoting mercury-free catalyst and trial application as the initial step of commercialization. The project will promote technology transfer and investment for the widespread application of best available techniques and best environmental practices (BAT/BEP). Further descriptions of FSPs and MSP are provided in Annex 6.

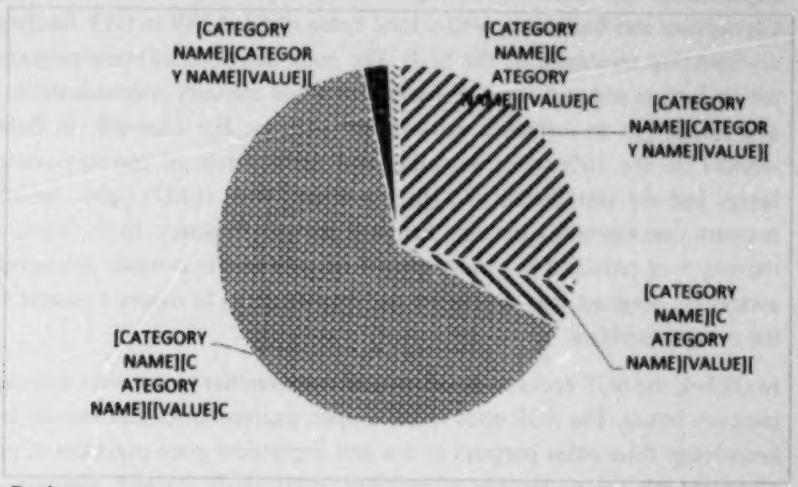
Table 1: GEF Funded Mercury Projects in GEF-5 (July 2010 – June 2014) and GEF-6 (July 2014 – October 2015)

Project Type	Number of Projects		GEF Grant Amount*	
	GEF-5 (July 2010-June 2014)	GEF-6 (July 2014-Oct 2015)	GEF-5	GEF-6
Enabling Activities**	20	20	$ 9,456,868	$8,297,045
Full-sized Projects	6	2	$1,354,768	$16,750,000
Medium-sized Projects	14	1	$11,309,900	$600,000

*These totals include only the GEF grant, not associated fees. For the medium- and full-sized projects, the total amounts include the funding allocated to mercury components only, not the full project amount.

** A number of the enabling activities projects includes multiple countries so while the total projects are 40, the number of countries covered is 71.

Figure 1: GEF-6 (July 2014 – October 2015) mercury funding allocation by project purposes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Cross Cutting Project

22. In GEF-6, there has been an emphasis on the importance of multi-focal area and cross-cutting projects that address and apply resources to several problems at once. These include projects and programs that incorporate biodiversity, climate change mitigation, and international waters. Within the chemicals and waste focal area, the cross-cutting projects can involve work with other Conventions that aim to reduce or eliminate Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) and other chemicals.

23. For example, one FSP in Colombia will contribute to the convention obligations of the country in two chemicals conventions, the Minamata Convention and the Stockholm Convention, and takes advantage of the integrated chemicals and waste focal area and seeks to introduce BAT/BET to reduce the release of mercury and unintentionally produced POPs (UPOPs) from the treatment of healthcare waste, the processing of Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment, secondary metal processing and biomass burning. The project takes an innovative holistic approach to achieve environmentally sound management of mercury and UPOPs-generating waste in the country.

GEF-Wide Policies and Programs

Small Grants Programme

24. The GEF Small Grants Programme (SGP), implemented by UNDP on behalf of the GEF partnership, was launched at the time of the Earth Summit in 1992. Through its decentralized country driven approach, the GEF SGP channels its support to civil society for environmental action, by providing grants of up to $50,000 directly to civil society organizations (CSOs), community-based organizations and indigenous peoples. Since 1992, the program has supported a cumulative total of more than nineteen thousands community-based and CSO-implemented projects across all GEF focal areas. The program is currently active in over one 125 countries, more than half of which are Least Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States. During the reporting period, 113 projects were under implementation in the chemicals and waste focal area, accounting for about three percent of SGP's current portfolio of 4,051 active projects.

25. During the reporting period, 12 projects related to mercury reduction and management were implemented in Belarus, China, Ghana, Guyana, Malaysia, Nepal, St. Vincent and Grenadines and Suriname, with a total value of $443,339 in GEF funding and $541,251 in co-financing leveraged by the SGP. The main activities of these projects have focused on the collection and recycling of e-waste to avoid mercury contamination, awareness raising and campaigns to influence government policies. For example, in Belarus, two projects worked on the collection, recycling and replacement of mercury-containing fluorescent lamps and the installation of Light Emitting Diode (LED) lights, which not only reduce mercury contamination but also increase energy efficiency. In St. Vincent and Grenadines, training was provided to young people on sustainable e-waste management, and a public awareness program was developed and implemented to increase people's knowledge about the e-waste problem.

26. In GEF-6, the SGP seeks to develop local communities' awareness and capacities to address mercury issues. The SGP aims to build upon its experience and lessons learnt together with knowledge from other partners to test and implement good practices to prevent, reduce and eliminate the use or release of mercury, particularly through mercury-contained e-waste collection and management and reducing or removing mercury use or release in ASGM. Further, the SGP seeks to strengthen global partnerships with organizations such as International POPs Elimination Network and others to jointly address mercury issues.

National Portfolio Formulation Exercise

27. The National Portfolio Formulation Exercise (NPFE) is a voluntary exercise undertaken to serve as a priority setting tool for countries and as a guide for GEF Agencies as they assist recipient countries. The NPFE, a component of the Country Support Program (CSP) of the GEF, was continued in GEF-6. At the request of the Operational Focal Points (OFP), the GEF supports the organization of these exercises with up to $30,000. This activity is to help GEF OFPs to engage main national stakeholders and line ministries, in the planning process for developing national priorities for GEF support.

28. Another component of the CSP is the National Dialogues. These are also voluntary activities that help countries to hold broad stakeholder gatherings to consider national objectives and strategies, as well as national coordination procedures. The National Dialogues that took place during the first year of GEF-6 implementation also contained a session or sessions dedicated to programming of GEF resources.

29. During the reporting period, the GEF Secretariat financed NPFEs in 27 countries. In addition, 12 countries carried out similar programming exercises during their National Dialogues.

Expanded Constituency Workshops

30. The expanded constituency workshops include the participation of GEF OFPs, Convention focal points and other key representatives, including CSOs. These meetings allow the participant's interaction with staff from the GEF Secretariat and the GEF Agencies to discuss priority issues, review policies and procedures, and share lessons and experiences from the development and implementation of GEF projects and their integration within national policy frameworks. During the reporting period, 12 expanded constituency workshops were held worldwide.

Gender

31. The GEF Policy on Gender Mainstreaming states that: "The GEF recognizes that gender equality is an important goal in the context of the projects that it finances because it advances both the GEF's goals for attaining global environmental benefits and the goal of gender equity and social inclusion." Building on the expertise and experience of GEF Agencies and other partners, the GEF developed the GEF Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) in 2014, and since then focused much on delivering on five main areas including: (1) consolidating the GEF Gender Partnership around the effective and collaborative implementation of the GEAP; (2) capacity development on gender mainstreaming at the GEF and other partners; (3) developing gender responsive project cycle and programming processes; (4) systemizing results-based management and ensuring greater accountability for gender mainstreaming; and lastly (5) building the knowledge base on gender related to the GEF 2020 strategy[17] and project portfolio.

32. Specifically, the GEF Secretariat, in coordination with the GEF Agencies, has reviewed and updated the GEF-6 project templates and guidelines, and incorporated a specific section in the templates to describe gender considerations, including approaches and plans to address gender equality and women's empowerment through GEF projects. Templates for the Project Implementation Form, Program Framework Document, and the CEO Endorsement Request have been updated. These project templates are recognized as one of the key tools to enable gender responsive project design and implementation of GEF projects. The chemicals portfolio has generated noticeable impacts on the improvement of the health of women and children through active engagement of both women and men in awareness-raising and capacity-building activities as well as the eradication of exposure to these chemicals. It is critical to design gender-responsive mercury projects, especially in sectors like ASGM, where women play a large role.

Results-Based Management

33. The GEF's Results-Based Management (RBM) system aims to improve management effectiveness and accountability by defining expected results and targets, monitoring progress toward results, integrating lessons learned into management decisions, and reporting on performance. The GEF has strengthened its RBM system by implementing RBM action plan approved by the GEF Council in October 2014.

34. The RBM Action Plan set out a way forward for the GEF to strengthen its RBM system in support of the objectives of the GEF 2020 strategy and the GEF-6 replenishment. Under the Action Plan, the GEF Secretariat, in partnership with the Agencies and Conventions, has committed to pursue five key actions; (1) Review and, where necessary, upgrade all results frameworks at the GEF with a focus on alignment, efficiency, and relevance, (2) Strengthen corporate-level results reporting, (3) Review and upgrade GEF's IT platform to support the RBM system, (4) Review and, where necessary, strengthen management and working capacity for RBM in the GEF Secretariat, and (5) Conduct an independent assessment of the improved RBM system.

[17] GEF/A.5/10.

35. As for the corporate-level results framework on chemicals and waste, the GEF-6 aims to increase the phase-out, disposal and reduction of releases of POPs, ozone depleting substances, mercury and other chemicals of global concern. The replenishment established a target for reduction of mercury at 1,000 tonnes.

Knowledge Management

36. Knowledge is a primary asset of the GEF partnership and supports its strategic objectives. The Policy recommendations in the GEF-6 Replenishment stressed the development of a knowledge management (KM) system to improve the GEF partnership's ability to learn by doing and thereby enhance its impact over time. The KM approach and an initial roadmap was presented to the GEF Council in June 2015. The approach articulates that the purpose of KM in the GEF context is to facilitate the capture, exchange and uptake of knowledge within and beyond the GEF Partnership with two key objectives: (1) to inform global, regional and national policy dialogues on options and approaches to reverse the course of environmental degradation, and (2) to improve the impact of GEF-supported projects and programs.

37. The GEF Secretariat established an informal KM Advisory Group, as a sounding board for GEF KM initiatives, with the participation of GEF Council members, the GEF agencies, GEF IEO, STAP, CSO network and convention secretariats, and organized a kick-off workshop right after the GEF Council in October 2015. The KM Advisory Group will guide the preparation of a more detailed KM implementation plan for the GEF Partnership (with clear targets, roles and budgets) including design of a GEF KM system, a forward publications plan, including in-depth technical studies conducted jointly by GEF partners.

Broadening the GEF Partnership

38. In line with the GEF-5 policy recommendation to broaden the GEF Partnership, the GEF Council agreed, in May 2011, to launch a pilot program to accredit "up to ten" new agencies, to be called GEF Project Agencies, to assist countries in implementing GEF-financed projects. The implementation of the GEF Accreditation Pilot consists of the following three stages:

Stage I: Value-added Review

Stage II: Accreditation Panel review for compliance with the GEF's Fiduciary Standards and Environmental and Social Safeguards including Gender Mainstreaming review, and

Stage III: the signing of necessary agreements with the GEF and the Trustee.

39. Eight new agencies have joined the partnership through the Accreditation Pilot. They are called GEF Project Agencies, and include Conservation International (CI), Development Bank of Latin America (CAF), Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA), Foreign Economic Cooperation Office of China (FECO), Fundo Brasileiro para a Biodiversidade (FUNBIO), International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), West African Development Bank (BOAD), and World Wildlife Fund (WWF-US). As of October 2015, seven of them have completed the Stage III, and one is in the process of finalizing necessary agreements. With their addition, there are 18 Agencies in the GEF partnership.

Appendix 1: Model letter on eligibility on Minamata Initial Assessment

[To be issued on letterhead of relevant Minister]

[Original signed copies to be addressed to Mr. Achim Steiner, Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme, P.O. Box 47074 - Nairobi 00100, Kenya, Email: executiveoffice@unep.org and to Ms. Naoko Ishii, CEO and Chairperson of the Global Environment Facility at 1818 H Street, NW, Mail Stop P4-400, Washington, DC 20433 USA, Email: secretariat@thegef.org]

[Signed copies to be addressed to the GEF Secretariat at secretariat@thegef.org and to the Interim Secretariat of the Minamata Convention at mercury.chemicals@unep.org]

To the attention of:

- *Mr. Achim Steiner, Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme*
- *Ms. Naoko Ishii, CEO and Chairperson of the Global Environment Facility*

Subject: Steps taken by [name of country] towards becoming a Party to the Minamata Convention on Mercury and request for consideration as eligible for financial support for enabling activities

At its sixth session held in Bangkok, Thailand, from 3 to 7 November 2014, the intergovernmental negotiating committee to prepare a global legally binding instrument on mercury requested the Global Environment Facility (GEF) to apply revised eligibility criteria in providing financial support to developing countries and countries with economies in transition for activities under the Minamata Convention on Mercury. In particular, it requested the eligibility for funding be extended for enabling activities to non-signatories to the Convention, provided that any such State is taking meaningful steps towards becoming a Party. Such request was approved by the Council of the GEF in January 2015.

[Name of country] was not in a position to sign the Minamata Convention on Mercury before it was closed to signature on 9 October 2014. However, our Government supports the objective of the Minamata Convention to protect human health and the environment from anthropogenic emissions and releases of mercury and mercury compounds and has taken a number of steps at the national level towards becoming a Party and allow for the deposit of the instrument of accession to the Convention. In particular, *[name of country]* has *[select as appropriate]:*

- participated in the sub-regional workshop organized by UNEP *[specify date/place]* and developed in that context a draft national roadmap on the Minamata Convention;
- discussed and/or further elaborated the draft national roadmap with other ministries / stakeholders;
- engaged with UN agencies, intergovernmental and/or non-governmental organizations to discuss possible actions at the national level in support for the accession to and early implementation of the Minamata Convention;
- undertaken a preliminary analysis of key mercury-related issues and/or stakeholders at the national level;
- organized a national interministerial / stakeholder consultation on the Minamata Convention *[specify date/place]*;
- identified the national process for accession to international instruments;
- carried out an initial legal gap analysis in order to identify the regulatory amendments that may be needed for the implementation of the Minamata Convention's provisions;
- Etc.*]*

In order to adequately prepare for acceding to and effectively implementing the Minamata Convention, our Government would benefit from the enabling activities funded under the GEF as they would allow the identification of the domestic mercury challenges and the extent to which existing legal and regulatory frameworks enable to implement future obligations under the Minamata Convention.

In light of the steps taken by my country towards acceding to the Minamata Convention in line with the requirements to become eligible to financial support for enabling activities, I thank you in advance for supporting our project application for a Minamata Convention Initial Assessment (MIA).

Signed on [specify date/place] by [Full name, function and official seal of relevant Minister]

Cc: Interim Secretariat of the Minamata Convention and GEF Secretariat

Appendix 2: Model letter on eligibility on artisanal and small-scale gold mining National Action Plan

INTRODUCTORY NOTES:

Status of the model letter and of notifications submitted before entry into force of the Convention

(1) The Global Environment Facility (GEF) *Initial guidelines for enabling activities for the Minamata Convention*[18] state that in the period between adoption of the Convention and the first meeting of the Conference of the Parties "countries eligible to receive GEF funding for the preparation of ASGM National Action Plans (ASGM NAPs) will (…) Notify the Secretariat of the Convention in writing that there is more than insignificant ASGM and processing in its territory".

(2) The present document has been prepared by the interim secretariat of the Minamata Convention in cooperation with the GEF Secretariat to assist countries prepare such notification and enable them meet the eligibility criteria for funding from the GEF in the period pending entry into force of the Convention.

(3) While it may be used as a guiding tool, it is not intended to interpret nor to substitute the original authentic texts of the Minamata Convention, nor is it intended to replace any formal notification under Article 3 paragraph 7 following entry into force of the Convention for a Party. Any notification submitted by a country before it becomes a Party does not replace the notification obligation it may have pursuant to paragraph 3 of Article 7 of the Minamata Convention.

Overview of the related provisions under Article 7 of the Minamata Convention on Mercury (see abstract from the Convention text in Annex I) [19]

(4) The measures in Article 7 and its associated Annex C apply to artisanal and small-scale gold mining and processing in which mercury amalgamation is used to extract gold from ore (paragraph 1).

(5) Each Party that has artisanal and small-scale gold mining and processing within its territory, independently of its importance, has the general obligations to take steps to reduce, and where feasible eliminate, the use of mercury and mercury compounds in such mining and processing, as well as the emissions and releases to the environment of mercury from such activities (paragraph 2).

(6) Further, a Party that at any time determines that artisanal and small-scale gold mining and processing in its territory is more than insignificant, shall notify the Secretariat (paragraph 3). Any such Party shall also develop and implement a national action plan in accordance with Annex C (paragraph 3(a)); submit its national action plan to the Secretariat no later than three years after entry into force of the Convention for it or three years after the notification to the Secretariat, whichever is later (paragraph 3(b)); and thereafter, provide a review every three years of the progress made in meeting its obligations under this Article and include such reviews in its reports submitted pursuant to Article 21 (paragraph 3(c)).

(7) The process to determine "more than insignificant" with respect to artisanal and small-scale gold mining and processing is not prescribed in the Convention. Each Party may use its own criteria in determining whether such activities are more than insignificant within its territory.

(8) The notification must be done at any time the Party determines artisanal and small-scale gold mining and processing in its territory is more than insignificant. The notification should therefore be submitted once a country becomes a Party.

[18] Document GEF/C.45/Inf.05/Rev.01.

[19] The below overview is provided for information purposes only and is not intended to interpret nor to substitute the original authentic texts of the Minamata Convention on Mercury.

ANNEX I : ABSTRACT FROM THE MINAMATA CONVENTION ON MERCURY

Article 7

Artisanal and small-scale gold mining

1. The measures in this Article and in Annex C shall apply to artisanal and small-scale gold mining and processing in which mercury amalgamation is used to extract gold from ore.

2. Each Party that has artisanal and small-scale gold mining and processing subject to this Article within its territory shall take steps to reduce, and where feasible eliminate, the use of mercury and mercury compounds in, and the emissions and releases to the environment of mercury from, such mining and processing.

3. Each Party shall notify the Secretariat if at any time the Party determines that artisanal and small-scale gold mining and processing in its territory is more than insignificant. If it so determines the Party shall:

(a) Develop and implement a national action plan in accordance with Annex C;

(b) Submit its national action plan to the Secretariat no later than three years after entry into force of the Convention for it or three years after the notification to the Secretariat, whichever is later; and

(c) Thereafter, provide a review every three years of the progress made in meeting its obligations under this Article and include such reviews in its reports submitted pursuant to Article 21.

4. Parties may cooperate with each other and with relevant intergovernmental organizations and other entities, as appropriate, to achieve the objectives of this Article. Such cooperation may include:

(a) Development of strategies to prevent the diversion of mercury or mercury compounds for use in artisanal and small-scale gold mining and processing;

(b) Education, outreach and capacity-building initiatives;

(c) Promotion of research into sustainable non-mercury alternative practices;

(d) Provision of technical and financial assistance;

(e) Partnerships to assist in the implementation of their commitments under this Article; and

(f) Use of existing information exchange mechanisms to promote knowledge, best environmental practices and alternative technologies that are environmentally, technically, socially and economically viable.

ANNEX II : MODEL LETTER OF NOTIFICATION THAT ARTISANAL AND SMALL-SCALE GOLD MINING AND PROCESSING IS MORE THAN INSIGNIFICANT

[Government letterhead]

The Coordinator
Interim secretariat of the Minamata Convention on Mercury
Chemicals and Waste Branch
Division of Technology, Industry and Economics
United Nations Environment Programme
11 - 13 chemin des Anémones
CH - 1219 Châtelaine, Geneva
SWITZERLAND

Fax: (41 22) 797 3460
E-mail: mercury.chemicals@unep.org

[Date]

Dear Sir or Madam,

Notification that artisanal and small-scale gold mining and processing is more than insignificant within [Name of country]

[Name of country] hereby notifies the interim secretariat of the Minamata Convention on Mercury that artisanal and small-scale gold mining and processing in which mercury amalgamation is used to extract gold from ore is more than insignificant within its territory.

Yours faithfully,

[Name and signature
of SAICM National Focal Point]

Appendix 3: Guidance from INC6 (November 2014) and GEF Response

Source	Guidance	GEF Response
Report of the intergovernmental negotiating committee to prepare a global legally binding instrument on mercury on the work of its sixth session, Annex III	Request the Global Environment Facility to apply the following eligibility criteria in providing financial support to developing countries and countries with economies in transition for activities under the Minamata Convention on Mercury: Eligibility criteria (a) Parties to the Convention; (b) Signatories to the Convention in undertaking activities, particularly enabling activities, to facilitate early implementation and ratification of the Convention; (c) Non-signatories to the Convention, for enabling activities, provided that any such State is taking meaningful steps towards becoming a Party as evidenced by a letter from the relevant minister to the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme and to the Chief Executive Officer and Chairperson of the Global Environment Facility.	The GEF Council approved new eligibility criteria in January 2015. The GEF Secretariat also circulated this revision of criteria among the GEF Agencies in February 2015. The Interim Minamata Convention Secretariat shared the template of the letter to be submitted from non-signatories on their meaningful steps towards becoming a Party. Based on the new criteria, Botswana, Namibia and Papua New Guinea submitted the letters. Their MIAs were approved accordingly.
Report of the intergovernmental negotiating committee to prepare a global legally binding instrument on mercury on the work of its sixth session, Annex III	Request the Global Environment Facility to consider the following activities when providing financial resources to developing countries and countries with economies in transition: (a) Enabling activities as outlined in the Initial Guidelines for Enabling Activities for the Minamata Convention on Mercury of the Global Environment Facility, particularly Minamata Convention initial assessment activities and national action plans for artisanal and small-scale gold mining, to facilitate ratification; (b) Activities to implement the provisions of the Convention, affording priority to those that: (i) Relate to legally binding obligations; (ii) Facilitate early implementation on entry into force; (iii) Allow for reduction in mercury emissions and releases and address the health and environmental impacts of mercury.	The GEF-6 Chemicals and Waste Strategy has two strategic objectives to meet the goals of eliminating harmful chemicals and waste. As for mercury, two programs support the activities requested by the INC6; Program 2 to support enabling activities and promote their integration into national budgets and planning processes, national and sector policies and actions and global monitoring, and Program 4 for reduction or elimination of anthropogenic emissions and releases of mercury to the environment. The GEF has programmed $141 million for mercury projects under these two programs of GEF-6. During the reporting period, 23 projects with the GEF grant amount of $25.6 million have been supported including enabling activities and medium- and full-sized projects. The supported projects are consistent with the guidance from the INC6, and GEF-6 Chemicals and Waste Strategy and guidelines for enabling activities for the Minamata Convention. The projects have provided assistance to countries to develop initial assessments of their mercury issues, mercury reduction or elimination, and sustainable alternatives.

Appendix 4: Guidance from the Conference of Plenipotentiaries on the Minamata Convention on Mercury (October 2013) and GEF Response

Source	Guidance	GEF Response
Minamata Convention Article 13	"The Global Environment Facility Trust Fund shall provide new, predictable, adequate and timely financial resources to meet costs in support of implementation of this Convention as agreed by the Conference of the Parties. For the purposes of this Convention, the Global Environment Facility Trust Fund shall be operated under the guidance of and be accountable to the Conference of the Parties. The Conference of the Parties shall provide guidance on overall strategies, policies, programme priorities and eligibility for access to and utilization of financial resources. In addition, the Conference of the Parties shall provide guidance on an indicative list of categories of activities that could receive support from the Global Environment Facility Trust Fund. The Global Environment Facility Trust Fund shall provide resources to meet the agreed incremental costs of global environmental benefits and the agreed full costs of some enabling activities."	The GEF during the negotiations of the 6th replenishment allocated $141 million of new funding to support the Minamata Convention during the 6th replenishment period (GEF-6), from July 2014 to June 2015. From this allocation, the GEF has been providing resources to meet the agreed incremental costs of global environmental benefits and the agreed full costs of some enabling activities. The GEF-6 Chemicals and Waste Strategy includes specific programs for mercury.
Final Act of the Conference of Plenipotentiaries on the Minamata Convention on Mercury	"Invites the Council of the Global Environment Facility to support developing countries and countries with economies in transition that are signatories to the Convention in undertaking activities, particularly enabling activities, to facilitate early implementation and ratification of the Convention;"	The 44th GEF Council in June 2013 allocated $10 million for enabling activities under the Minamata Convention in the GEF-5 period, specifically MIAs and ASGM NAPs. Guidelines have been developed for application of these projects. In GEF-6, $30 million in additional resources has been allocated for these enabling activities. The initial guidelines may be amended by the INC or COP as required. The guidelines can be found at: http://www.thegef.org/gef/node/9983
Final Act of the Conference of Plenipotentiaries on the Minamata Convention on Mercury	"Invites the Council of the Global Environment Facility to give effect to the inclusion of the Global Environment Facility Trust Fund as a part of the financial mechanism of the Minamata Convention and to recommend to the Assembly of the Global Environment Facility, as a matter of urgency, that it make any adjustments to the Instrument for the Establishment of the Restructured Global Environment Facility that are necessary to allow it to fulfil its role in the financial mechanism;"	At the 5th GEF Assembly in May 2014, the GEF Instrument was amended to include the Minamata Convention in the list of conventions served by the GEF. The new paragraph 6e of the GEF instrument contains the following text: "(e) Operate as one of the entities comprising the financial mechanism of the Minamata Convention on Mercury, pursuant to its Article 13, paragraphs 5, 6 and 8. In such respects, the GEF shall operate under the guidance of, and be accountable to the Conference of the Parties, which shall provide guidance on overall strategies, policies, program priorities and eligibility for access to and utilization of financial resources. In

Source	Guidance	GEF Response
		addition, the GEF shall receive guidance from the Conference of the Parties on an indicative list of categories of activities that could receive support; and shall provide resources to meet the agreed incremental costs of global environmental benefits and the agreed full costs of some enabling activities, pursuant to Article 13, paragraph 7, of the Minamata Convention on Mercury."
Final Act of the Conference of Plenipotentiaries on the Minamata Convention on Mercury	"Decides that the Committee should develop, for consideration by the Conference of the Parties at its first meeting, a draft memorandum of understanding to be agreed between the Council of the Global Environment Facility and the Conference of the Parties on arrangements to give effect to the relevant provisions of paragraphs 5 to 8 of Article 13;"	GEF Secretariat shared the memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants with the Interim Minamata Secretariat for background to assist in developing the MOU between the GEF Council and the Minamata COP. Examples of MOU between the GEF Council and various COPs have been provided by the Interim Minamata Convention Secretariat in the meeting documents for INC6.
Final Act of the Conference of Plenipotentiaries on the Minamata Convention on Mercury	"Decides also that the Committee should develop, and adopt provisionally pending formal adoption by the Conference of the Parties at its first meeting, guidance to the Council of the Global Environment Facility on overall strategies, policies, programme priorities, eligibility for access to and utilization of financial resources and an indicative list of categories of activities eligible for support from the Global Environment Facility Trust Fund;"	Noted. The GEF will incorporate and respond to guidance received by the INC and will report at a subsequent meeting of the Convention.
Final Act of the Conference of Plenipotentiaries on the Minamata Convention on Mercury	"Encourages the Council of the Global Environment Facility to apply provisionally any guidance provided to it by the Committee pending the adoption of the guidance by the Conference of the Parties;"	Noted. The GEF will incorporate and respond to guidance received by the INC and will report at a subsequent meeting of the Convention.
Final Act of the Conference of Plenipotentiaries on the Minamata Convention on Mercury	"Invites donors to the Global Environment Facility Trust Fund to contribute through the sixth and subsequent replenishments of the Global Environment Facility Trust Fund additional financial resources adequate to enable the Global Environment Facility to support activities to facilitate the rapid entry into force and effective implementation of the Convention;"	The 6th replenishment of the GEF Trust Fund includes an allocation of $141 million to support activities to advance early entry into force and effective implementation of the Minamata Convention. $30 million has been allocated for enabling activities and $111 million has been allocated to support early action.

Appendix 5: Table of GEF-6 (July 2014–October 2015) Funded Projects

Enabling Activity Projects

Agency	Country	Title	Project Type	GEF Grant ($)
UNDP	Albania	Minamata Initial Assessment for Albania	EA	200,000
UNEP	Cameroon	Development of Minamata Initial Assessment in Cameroon	EA	200,000
UNIDO	Chad	Minamata Convention Initial Assessment in Chad	EA	200,000
UNIDO	Colombia	Minamata Convention Initial Assessment (MIA) in the Republic of Colombia	EA	200,000
UNIDO	Gabon	National Action Plan on Mercury in the Artisanal and Small-Scale Gold Mining sector in Gabon	EA	500,000
UNDP	Guyana	Minamata Initial Assessment for Guyana	EA	200,000
UNDP	India	Improve Mercury Management in India	EA	1,000,000
UNDP	Jordan	Strengthen National Decision Making towards Ratification of the Minamata Convention and Build Capacity towards Implementation of Future Provisions	EA	200,000
UNEP	Macedonia	Development of a Minamata Initial Assessment	EA	200,000
UNDP	Malaysia	Minamata Convention Initial Assessment in Malaysia	EA	250,000
UNIDO	Mozambique	National Action Plan on Mercury in the Mozambican Artisanal and Small-Scale Gold Mining sector	EA	500,000
UNIDO	Nepal	Minamata Initial Assessment in Nepal	EA	200,000
UNDP	Panama	Minamata Initial Assessment for Panama	EA	200,000
UNEP	Papua New Guinea	Development of Minamata Initial Assessment in Papua New Guinea	EA	300,000
UNDP	Seychelles	Strengthen National Decision Making Towards Ratification of the Minamata Convention and Build Capacity Towards Implementation of Future Provisions.	EA	199,100
UNIDO	Regional (Burkina Faso, Benin, Niger, Togo	Minamata Convention Initial Assessment in Francophone Africa II	EA	800,000
UNIDO	Regional (Guinea, Mali, Senegal)	Minamata Convention Initial Assessment in Francophone Africa I	EA	600,000
UNEP	Regional (Angola, Malawi, Zimbabwe)	Development of Minamata Convention on Mercury Initial Assessment in Africa	EA	547,945
UNDP	Regional (Bangladesh, Guinea-Bissau, Mauritania, Mozambique, Samoa)	Strengthen national decision making towards ratification of the Minamata Convention and build capacity towards implementation of future provisions	EA	1,000,000
UNEP	Regional (Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, Swaziland)	Development of Minamata Initial Assessment	EA	800,000

Medium-Sized Projects

Agency	Country	Title	Project Type	GEF Grant ($)
UNIDO	Tunisia	Improve Mercury Management in Tunisia	MSP	600,000

Full-Sized Projects

Agency	Country	Title	Project Type	GEF Grant ($)
UNIDO	China	Demonstration of Mercury Reduction and Minimization in the Production of Vinyl Chloride Monomer	FP	16,500,000
UNDP	Colombia	Reducing UPOPs and Mercury Releases from Healthcare Waste Management, e-Waste Treatment, Scrap Processing and Biomass Burning	FP	5,750,000[a]

a: The amount of Grant for mercury component is $250,000.

Appendix 6: GEF-6 (July 2014–October 2015) Funded Medium-Sized and Full-Sized Projects and Descriptions

Mercury Emissions and Releases Project

Country	China	GEF ID	6921
Title	Demonstration of Mercury Reduction and Minimization in the Production of Vinyl Chloride Monomer		
Implementing/ Executing Partners	GEF Agency	UNIDO	
	Executing Agency	Foreign Economic Cooperation Office, Ministry of Environmental Protection, China	
GEF Funding	$16,500,000	Co-financing	$99,000,000
Project Summary	The objective of the proposal is to reduce risks of mercury on human health and the environmental impact from industrial production of VCM to achieve 50% reduction of mercury use in per unit production by the year 2020 (reference year 2010) through optimizing the existing production and achieving 90% recovery of mercury in production processes. Promote mercury-free catalyst research and development and trial application as the initial step of commercialization. The project will promote technology transfer and investment for the widespread application of BAT/BEP. This will emphasize the technology accessibility and removing the market barriers from applying BAT/BEP across the industry sector. Currently smaller PVC producers are reluctant to make the conversion to low mercury processes due to perceived high costs and technical uncertainties. The project will further introduce public-private partnership model to foster a wide range of domestic and international exchanges and cooperation partners participation (including the VCM producers, catalyst producers, academic institutions and public sectors such as the Ministry of Environment Protection and the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology), promoting the technology transfer and exchange.		

Other Projects

Country	Colombia		GEF ID	6928	
Title	Reducing UPOPs and Mercury Releases from Healthcare Waste Management, e-Waste Treatment, Scrap Processing and Biomass Burning				
Implementing/ Executing Partners	GEF Agency		UNDP		
	Executing Agency		Ministries and Regional Environmental Authorities		
GEF Funding	$5,750,000		Co-financing	$22,050,000	
GEF Funding	Mercury Component	$250,000		Mercury Component	$1,000,000
Project Summary	This aims to introduce BAP/BAT to reduce the release of unintentionally generated POPs and mercury from the treatment of healthcare waste, the processing of Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment, secondary metal processing and biomass burning. The project takes a holistic approach to achieve environmentally sound management of UPOPs and mercury generating waste in the country. This holistic approach makes the project innovative. In addition to demonstrating environmentally sound management of UPOPs and mercury the project will strengthen the institutional, administrative, legal, technical, and regulatory framework for managing these harmful chemicals. This capacity building will contribute to the sustainability of the project. Additionally, the inventory of dioxins and furans from this project will be incorporated in to the country's National Implementation Plan for the Stockholm Convention. This project will contribute to the convention obligations of the country in two chemicals conventions, the Stockholm Convention and the Minamata Convention on Mercury.				

Country	Tunisia	GEF ID	8000
Title	Improve Mercury Management in Tunisia		
Implementing/ Executing Partners	GEF Agency	UNIDO	
	Executing Agency	- Directorate General for the Environment and Quality of Life - National Sanitary and Environmental Product Control Agency - International Centre for Environmental Technologies of Tunis	
GEF Funding	$600,000	Co-financing	$2,350,000
Project Summary	This project aims to contribute to the reduction of negative mercury impacts on human health and the environment in Tunisia. As a result of using mercury-cell technology for 36 years (1962-1998) to produce chlorine, the National Society of Cellulose and Paper Alfa (SNCPA) is currently a hotspot for mercury contamination. This project has two components; (i) developing a national inventory of mercury sources, conducting a gap analysis of the regulatory and institutional framework, enhancing the laboratory capacity to analyse mercury and raising the awareness on risks associated with mercury, and (ii) conducting a complementary assessment of previous investigations at the SNCPA site and in the downstream alluvial plain including additional soil and water samples as deemed necessary and a sanitary risk evaluation based on biological samples.		
Project Summary			

Annex III

UNITAR Report of activities to support the ratification of the Minamata Convention for 2015

Minamata Ratification Dossier project

In 2013, the Federal Office for the Environment (FOEN) from Switzerland provided UNITAR funding in support of the project "ratification and early implementation of the Minamata Convention on Mercury". The objective of this project is to accelerate the readiness of countries for the ratification of the Minamata Convention. These actions have assisted countries in identifying the most adequate approaches and the initial steps for ratification. The following table provides information on the project status and countries that have participated in this project:

Countries	Project Status
Armenia, Colombia, Gambia, Ghana, Jordan, Mongolia, Peru, Philippines, Senegal, Uruguay	Either submitting final reports or finlizing activities
Senegal, Zambia and Nigeria	Ratification dossier prepared and project closed
Indonesia, Thailand and Yemen	Start in 2016

In addition to the above list of countries, in December 2015, the Federal Office for the Environment (FOEN) from Switzerland provided UNITAR funding to work with five additional countries on the same project. Invitations to participate will be sent to countries during the first quarter of 2016.

To date, three countries participating in the UNITAR projects have ratified the convention (Jordan, Mongolia and Uruguay). There are five additional countries at the final stages of ratification.

Additionally, UNITAR, in close collaboration with the Interim Secretariat of the Minamata Convention on Mercury, has developed a Guidance note - "Advancing the National Ratification of the Minamata Convention" - to assist countries with the ratification process.

Minamata Initial Assessments (MIAs)

In 2014, the Global Environment Facility (GEF) invited countries to submit applications to develop a national assessment on mercury management to identify domestic mercury challenges and the extent to which existing legal and regulatory frameworks enable a country to implement future obligations under the Convention.

UNITAR, in close coordination with UNDP, UNEP and UNIDO, is currently supporting countries to develop their MIAs. At this moment, UNITAR is supporting more than 25 countries around the world to develop their MIAs.

In addition to the MIA development, UNITAR has assisted UNDP and IOMC organizations to develop guidance on MIA development. The guidance is nearing completion and is expected to be available in the next coming weeks.

MercuryLearn site and mercury inventory modules

In response to the increasing interest of countries to develop mercury emissions' inventories and the subsequent high demand for guidance and training on this topic, UNEP and UNITAR agreed to collaborate on developing an online training platform: MercuryLearn. The platform currently hosts the training modules (for level 1 and 2) on mercury inventory development, which are based on the "Toolkit for identification and quantification of mercury releases", produced by UNEP.

The main objectives of the MercuryLearn platform include:

- Support dissemination and enhance the usability of the UNEP Toolkit as a standard methodology to prepare national inventories of mercury emissions and releases;
- Increase interest by stakeholders and countries on preparing mercury inventories;
- Provide a platform for experts to exchange information and experiences in preparing inventories;
- Ensure consistency of inventory-development by using the UNEP toolkit as the standard method.

The mercury inventory training modules were launched in July 2015 and are open to anyone interested in mercury inventory development. UNITAR is currently working on an "offline" version of the modules to assist countries with limited or no internet access. The MercuryLearn platform can be found at: http://mercurylearn.unitar.org/

UNITAR is a proud and willing supporter of ratification and implementation of the Minamata Convention. We look forward to working collaboratively with the interim secretariat and other stakeholders in 2016.

Annex IV

Work of the World Health Organization relevant to the Minamata Convention: August 2014 to December 2015

1. Collaboration between the World Health Organization and the INC and interim Secretariat of the Minamata Convention stems from: the preamble of the Convention which recognizes the activities of WHO in the protection of human health related to mercury; Article 16 which establishes that the Conference of the Parties should consult and collaborate with WHO as appropriate in considering health-related issues, and promote cooperation and exchange of information with WHO; Resolution 3 of the Conference of the Plenipotentiaries which invites WHO to cooperate closely with the Conference of the Parties "to support the implementation of the Convention, particularly Article 16, and to provide information to the Conference of the Parties on the progress made in this regard"; and World Health Assembly Resolution WHA67.11.

2. In the period since WHO last communicated to the INC, i.e. August 2014 to December 2015, activities have focussed on: convening two regional workshops for ministries of health; issuing guidance relating to mercury thermometers and sphygmomanometers and artisanal and small scale gold mining (ASGM); and implementing projects on dental amalgam and biomonitoring. Further information on these, plus other, activities is provided in the following sections.

3. In addition, WHO has provided technical advice to the interim Secretariat, to assist with responses to enquiries received.

Regional Meetings convened by WHO

4. WHO has convened a number of regional meetings to promote and discuss engagement of the health sector, in particular ministries of health, in the implementation of the Convention.

5. In June 2015, a meeting on *Health sector involvement in the implementation of the Minamata Convention: mercury exposure assessment and prevention* was convened by the WHO Regional Office for Europe, in Bonn, Germany, with financial support of the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety. The meeting was attended by the following Member States: Armenia, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Georgia, Germany, Hungary, Israel, Italy, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Lithuania, Poland, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia, Switzerland, Turkmenistan and Ukraine, and by representatives of international and non-governmental organizations and by a number of experts. Needs for capacity building and technical support to facilitate the implementation of the Convention in WHO European Region Member States were identified, including the development of human biomonitoring studies, strategy and policy development, training and capacity building, awareness raising (development of a toolkit to support implementation of article 16 on health aspects, and a fact sheet related to occupational mercury exposure) and information sharing and networking. Meeting participants acknowledged that actions related to the Convention should preferably be integrated with other health sector strategies; examples of entry points include food safety programs for control of methyl mercury exposure and national environment and health action plans.

6. A WHO workshop entitled *Health in implementing the Minamata Convention on Mercury* was organized by the WHO Regional Office for the Americas (PAHO) from 7-8 October 2015 in Montevideo, Uruguay, for Spanish-speakers. The workshop supported financially by the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety and PAHO, and was attended by the following Member States: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela, as well as representatives of intergovernmental organizations, civil society and academia. The objective of the workshops was to promote understanding of the roles of the health sector in the implementation of the Convention and the related World Health Assembly resolution. A number of issues were addressed including the use of various mercury products in health care, ASGM, Article 16 on health aspects and the experience of ministries of health in preparation for ratification / implementation of the Convention. Participants prepared and signed a *Declaration of Montevideo* (reproduced in Annex I). The Declaration calls for ministries of health in Member States to designate a focal point to implement national measures in accordance with the provisions of the Minamata Convention.

Mercury-containing thermometers and sphygmomanometers

7. In 2015, WHO published guidance for ministries of health on *Developing national strategies for phasing-out mercury-containing thermometers and sphygmomanometers, including in the context of the Minamata Convention: Key considerations and step-by-step guidance*. This guidance aims to assist ministries of health with planning and leading the development of the system-wide (national) strategies that will now be required. A Russian language version also now available. http://www.who.int/ipcs/assessment/public_health/mercury/en/

ASGM

8. WHO is developing tools, guidance and training materials to support countries to address the public health impacts of ASGM as well as support the development of public health strategies as required under Article 7 and Annex C of the Convention. Materials have been piloted in Mongolia (2013) and Ghana (2015) and are expected to be finalized in 2016.

9. On 1 – 2 October 2014, WHO, with financial support of the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety, convened an expert meeting on Health in Artisanal Small Scale Gold Mining in Geneva, Switzerland. The meeting discussed development of the public health strategy for national action plans to reduce or eliminate mercury emissions from ASGM. The suite of materials on ASGM and health under development comprises the following:

a. guidance on how to conduct a rapid assessment of the health situation of ASGM miners and their family members;

b. teaching materials for use in training health care providers about how to address environmental and occupational health issues associated with ASGM, including through awareness raising measures about options for reducing the use of/prevent further exposure to mercury;

c. guidance on how to articulate public health strategies on ASGM including as part of wider National Action Plans developed with different sector stakeholders (e.g. mining, environment, etc.); and

d. good practice guidance on the use of human bio monitoring in an ASGM context.

10. The WHO Regional Office for South-East Asia is working to integrate and apply some of the WHO tools, guidance and approaches developed in the context of gender, equity and human rights into the guidance materials currently under development for ASGM.

Dental amalgam

11. In partnership with UNEP, WHO has implemented pilot projects in three countries in West Africa relating to the phase down in use of dental amalgam. Currently the East Africa Dental Amalgam Phase down Project (EADAP) II is being implemented to expand and continue the efforts of the first phase of the project. EADAP II will include demonstration activities in additional dental clinics and examine approaches to ensure the sustainability of dental amalgam phase down, including specific needs for mercury waste management.

12. The WHO Regional Office for Europe has raised the awareness of phasing-down the use of dental materials through its annual meetings with ministries of health based Chief Dental Officers in Rome and Minsk. The meetings also emphasized the importance of pre- and continuing education on future dental materials.

13. WHO contributed to a report published by UNEP entitled *Lessons from countries phasing down dental amalgam*. WHO provided technical advice in planning of the background survey and the finalization of the survey report.

Biomonitoring

14. The WHO Regional Office for Europe, with input from WHO Headquarters, has been actively working with UNEP on the implementation of a global monitoring project to gather baseline information on mercury levels at a number of global sites. The project, entitled *Development of a Plan for Global Monitoring of Human Exposure to and Environmental Concentrations of Mercury*, funded by the GEF, will run for two years from 1 January 2015 and aims to harmonize approaches for the monitoring of mercury in humans and the environment, and strengthen capacity for the analysis of mercury in humans and the environment. WHO is implementing the biomonitoring component (including analysis of mercury contamination of human scalp hair, cord blood and urine) of the

project. WHO is also preparing related standard operating procedures, as well as procedures for the monitoring of mercury and methylmercury in fish and shellfish. A pilot survey to assess exposure to mercury is planned to begin in 2016 and training for representatives of potential pilot countries will take place in Slovenia in February 2016.

Other activities and collaborations

15. For the Bonn workshop, WHO published an Annotated Bibliography of Key Information from the World Health Organization relevant to the Minamata Convention on Mercury. A summary table listing the information relevant to each article of the Convention is provided in Annex II. The full document is available from: http://www.who.int/ipcs/assessment/public_health/mercury/en/

16. The WHO Regional Office for Europe organized a Special Session on *Protecting human health from adverse impacts of mercury and its compounds: from science to policy and actions* during the 12th International Conference on Mercury as a Global Pollutant, with the objective of highlighting the support needed from the scientific community to implementation of the health aspects of the Convention. The main topics discussed during the Session included breaking down the barriers hindering medical research, assessment of health risks posed by mercury to vulnerable population groups, strengthening capacity of developing countries to address mercury problems, improvement of advisory systems for communication of methyl mercury risks to public, and development of a harmonized scheme for assessing human exposure to mercury on the global scale. The abstract was published in the Conference book[20].

17. The WHO Regional Office for Europe convened an expert group meeting from 29 September - 1 October 2015 on *Available evidence for the future update of the WHO Global Air Quality Guidelines*. In relation to the WHO air quality guideline value for inorganic mercury, the following was agreed "considering the limited new health evidence from inorganic mercury, the relatively low direct contribution to human exposure through air (levels of inorganic mercury in air are extremely low), and that a UN convention exists specifically addressing mercury, experts agreed in the context of this process that there is no need for immediate re-evaluation of the evidence".

18. WHO regional offices participated in almost all of the first series of the UNEP sub-regional workshops on ratification and early implementation of the Minamata Convention. The WHO Regional Office for South-East Asia financially supported the participation of health ministries in the workshop held in New Delhi.

19. WHO, together with the US National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences, convened a workshop on *Prevention-intervention strategies to reduce exposure to e-waste* in Depok, West Java in August 2015. Topics discussed include risk communication and capacity building to reduce exposure to chemicals via e-waste, including mercury.

20. WHO published an article in the Pan American Journal of Public Health on the proper design and dissemination of fish advisories within the context of implementation of the Convention[21].

21. WHO participates in the IOMC Mercury Group, established to coordinate the work of the IOMC organizations on mercury, in particular, to support a harmonized approach in the implementation of MIA and NAP projects.

22. WHO participates in the DC ASGM round table quarterly meetings in Washington DC organized by the Natural Resources Defense Council, to exchange information on projects, programs and networking opportunities to foster further collaboration among institutions.

[20] Implementation of the Minamata Convention in the health sector: the role of WHO. I.Zastenskaya1, N. Hassan, C. Vickers, E. Paunovic, D.Jarosinska/ ICMGP 2015 KOREA 12th International Conference on Mercury as a Global Pollutant, June 14-19, 2015. Jeju Korea www.mercury2015.com.

[21] PAHO Bulletin of Public Health publication: Boischio A. Developmental neurotoxicity: methylmercury and prenatal exposure protection in the context of the Minamata Convention. Rev Panam Salud Publica. 2015; 38(4):243-247.

Appendix I – Montevideo Declaration on the Minamata Convention

Montevideo Declaration on the Minamata Convention

8 October 2015

The representatives of the Ministries of Health of Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela, and of civil society and academia, meeting in Montevideo, Uruguay, on 8 October 2015 at the WORKSHOP ON HEALTH IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MINAMATA CONVENTION ON MERCURY

The Parties,

Recognizing that mercury is a chemical of global concern owing to its long-range atmospheric transport, its persistence in the environment once anthropogenically introduced, its ability to bioaccumulate in ecosystems and its significant negative effects on human health and the environment,

Noting that the Minamata Convention contains an article on health-related aspects in addition to other relevant provisions, and that the Convention imposes a number of obligations on Parties, requiring, where applicable, the adoption of measures for the health and allied sectors such as the gradual elimination, through the prohibition of the manufacture, import or export prior to 2020, according to the dates of entry into force of the Convention, of mercury thermometers and sphygmomanometers, cosmetics containing mercury — including skin lightening soaps and creams — , topical antiseptics containing mercury and dental amalgam with added mercury, and the development of public-health strategies in national action plans to eliminate or reduce the use of mercury in the mining industry, unless the amounts involved are declared to be negligible;

Endorsing the implementation of World Health Assembly resolution WHA67.11 of May 2014 on the role of WHO and ministries of health in the Minamata Convention on Mercury;

Recalling the public health impacts of exposure to mercury and mercury compounds: the role of WHO and ministries of public health in the implementation of the Minamata Convention;

Recalling the renewed commitments of the post 2015 development agenda (25-27 September 2015), the sustainable development goals contained in the final document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Río+20) (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 20-22 June 2012) entitled "The Future We Want", the 2010 Adelaide Declaration on Health in All Policies, and the 8th Global Conference on Health Promotion, held in Helsinki in 2013, which called for collaboration between all sectors to promote public health, with a plan of action adopted by PAHO in 2014, the Universal Health Coverage policy and strategy adopted by PAHO in 2013; and the Declaration of the Ministers of Health of MERCOSUR and Associated States on the Management of Chemical Substances (June 2013), signed at the 34th meeting in Montevideo, Uruguay;

Recalling that the objective of the Minamata Convention on Mercury is to protect human health and the environment from anthropogenic emissions and releases of mercury and mercury compounds;

Mindful that the Minamata Convention on Mercury encourages Parties to:

(a) Promote the development and implementation of strategies and programmes to identify and protect populations at risk, particularly vulnerable populations, and which may include adopting science-based health guidelines relating to exposure to mercury and mercury compounds, setting targets for mercury exposure reduction, where appropriate, and public education, with the participation of public health and other involved sectors;

(b) Promote the development and implementation of science-based educational and preventive programmes on occupational exposure to mercury and mercury compounds;

(c) Promote appropriate health-care services for prevention, treatment and care for populations affected by exposure to mercury or mercury compounds; and

(d) Establish and strengthen, as appropriate, the institutional and health professional capacities for the prevention, diagnosis, treatment and monitoring of health risks related to exposure to mercury and mercury compounds;

Stressing the importance of financial, technical, technological, and capacity-building support, particularly for developing countries, and countries with economies in transition, in order to strengthen national capabilities for the management of mercury and to promote the effective implementation of the Convention;

Noting that nothing in this Convention prevents a Party from taking additional domestic measures consistent with the provisions of this Convention in an effort to protect human health and the environment from exposure to mercury in accordance with that Party's other obligations under applicable international law;

Have agreed that:

(a) It is vitally important that WHO/PAHO support the implementation and coordination of activities to advise and support Member States in their efforts to enforce the Minamata Convention on Mercury, including mobilizing funds and in respect of all other health-related aspects envisaged in WHO/PAHO work programmes, with a view to promoting and protecting human health;

(b) WHO/PAHO must support Member States in developing and implementing strategies and programmes to identify and protect populations at risk, particularly vulnerable populations, including communities in areas affected by artisinal or small-scale gold mining, which could include the approval of science-based health guidelines relating to exposure to mercury and mercury compounds, setting targets for mercury exposure reduction, where appropriate, and public education, with the participation of public health and other involved sectors;

(c) it is necessary and appropriate that ministries of health in Member States should designate a focal point to implement national measures in accordance with the provisions of the Minamata Convention.

Appendix II - Index of Key WHO Information organized by Article of the Minamata Convention

Table 1. WHO information resources in relation to the articles of the Minamata Convention on Mercury. Down the side are the WHO information resources. Across the top are the articles of the Minamata Convention on Mercury (directly) linked to human health issues. Article 4: Mercury- added products, 5: Manufacturing processes in which mercury or mercury compounds are used, 7: Artisanal and small-scale gold mining, 8: Emissions, 9: Releases, 16: Health aspects, 17: Information exchange, 18: Public information, awareness and education, 19: Research, development and monitoring, 20: Implementation plans, 21: Reporting, 22: Effectiveness evaluation. Note that article 1 refers to the objective of the Convention to protect human health and the environment from anthropogenic emissions and releases of mercury and mercury compounds, and is therefore overarching.

WHO Information resources	Articles of Minamata Convention											
	4	5	7	8	9	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
WHO fact sheet –												
-WHO Fact Sheet on mercury (2013)			X			X		X				
Thermometers (for medical use) and Sphygmomanometers –												
-Developing national strategies for phasing out mercury-containing thermometers and sphygmomanometers in health care, including in the context of the Minamata Convention on Mercury: key considerations and step-by-step guidance (2015);	X					X	X					
-Replacement of mercury thermometers and sphygmomanometers in health care (2011);	X					X						
-A new solar-powered blood pressure measuring device for low-resource settings (2010).	X					X						
Skin Lightening Products-												
-Mercury in Skin Lightening Products (2011).	X							X	X			
Dental Amalgam-												
Future use of materials for dental restoration (2010);	X						X					
-Promoting the phase down of dental amalgam in developing countries (2014;	X						X	X		X		
-East Africa Dental Amalgam Phase-Down Project	X						X	X				
Artisanal and Small-scale Gold Mining -												
-Mercury Exposure and Health Impacts among Individuals in the Artisanal and Small-Scale Gold Mining Community: A Comprehensive Review (2014);			X						X			
-Mercury Exposure and Health Impacts among Individuals in the Artisanal and Small-Scale Gold Mining Community (2014);			X						X			
-Hydrogen cyanide and cyanides (2004);						X	X					
-International Chemical Safety Cards (ICSC) on a number of cyanide compounds;						X		X				
-IPCS/CEC Evaluation of Antidotes Series- Antidotes for Poisoning by Cyanide (1993);							X					
-Integrated Management of Adolescent and Adult Illness district clinician manual: Hospital care for adolescents and adults (2011);						X						
- Developing national public health strategies on ASGM, including in the context of the Minamata Convention on Mercury (forthcoming 2015);			X			X		X				
-Conducting health situation assessments in the context of ASGM (forthcoming 2015);			X			X		X				
-Training materials (forthcoming 2015)- for training health care providers on how to identify and address environmental and occupational health issues associated with ASGM.			X			X		X				
WHO Health Guidelines on air, drinking water and dietary intake-												
-WHO Air Quality Guidelines (2000);				X		X	X		X			

WHO Information resources	4	5	7	8	9	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
-WHO guidelines for indoor air quality: Household fuel combustion (2014);				X		X			X			
-WHO Guidelines for Drinking- Water Quality (2011);					X	X	X		X			
-The Seventy-second report of the Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives (2010);						X	X		X			
-Joint FAO/WHO expert consultation on the risks and benefits of fish consumption (2010);						X	X		X			
-Health and the environment: addressing the health impact of air pollution WHO A68/18 (2015);				X						X		
-Health and the environment. Climate and health. outcome of the WHO Conference on Health and Climate (2014).						X	X					
Biomonitoring-												
-Human biomonitoring survey;						X			X			
-Report on information on harmonized systems for measuring mercury body burden (2011);						X			X		X	X
-Biomonitoring-based indicators of exposure to chemical pollutants (2012).						X			X			
Harmonized methodologies for estimating health impacts-												
-Mercury: Assessing the environmental burden of disease at national and local levels (2008);		X				X			X			
-Guidance for identifying populations at risk from mercury exposure (2008);		X				X						X
-Report on indicators to evaluate and track the health impacts of mercury and identify vulnerable populations (2010).						X		X				X
Risk Assessment information and health and safety information for workers-												
-Elemental mercury and Inorganic mercury compounds: Human health aspects (2003);						X	X					
-International Chemical Safety Cards (ICSC) on a number of mercury compounds;						X		X				
-Children's exposure to mercury compounds, (2010).						X				X		